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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2460

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June 1, 1990

FARM SURVEY -- USDA will conduct a major survey of the nation's farms & ranches June 1 - 15. The June Ag Survey is the first and largest of a series of surveys USDA does during the year designed to assess 1990 crop & livestock production & inventories. USDA uses a sample of about 130,000 farmers & ranchers nationwide to provide information to use in making state, regional & national estimates. Contact: Larry Beard (202) 447-5394.

SLIGHT COOLING -- A new USDA study of nearly 1,000 official weather station records show the nation has cooled by one-third of one degree Fahrenheit since 1920. The change was very uneven. Washington, Ga., for example, cooled by 3.78 degrees, while Schenectady, N.Y., warmed by 3.23 degrees. "On average, though, the change at 961 official weather stations over the past 70 years was about one-third degree decrease," says Sherwood B. Idso, a USDA physicist. Contact: Sherwood B. Idso (602) 379-4356.

IMPORTED OSTRICHES -- USDA is proposing to ease restrictions imposed in August of 1989 on imported flightless birds. USDA banned the import of ostriches, cassowaries, emus, kiwis and rheas after exotic ticks were found on ostriches imported from Tanzania, Africa. Comments on the USDA proposal to again permit imports of flightless birds are due to USDA by June 29. Contact: Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222.

MICROWAVE COOKING -- As popularity of microwave cooking continues to grow, people continue to be concerned about the safety of meat & poultry cooked in the ovens. Even the cookware & plastic wraps used in microwaves are being questioned. The Spring 1990 issue of "Food News for Consumers" contains a two-page microwave handbook, which addresses these concerns. For a copy of "Food News for Consumers," call: Mary Ann Parmley (202) 447-9351.

FARM ECONOMY LOOKS STRONG -- The improved outlook for 1990 farm sales is strengthening income prospects, USDA economists said recently. Gains in cash receipts are likely to outpace both expense increases & reductions in direct government payments. Although production is expected to increase slightly, strong demand continues to support most commodity prices. Contact: Bob McElroy (202) 786-1800.



HERE'S ANOTHER LOOK at some of the farm broadcasters from across the nation who attended the "Washington Ag Watch" Conference in Washington, D.C., May 20 - 22. Top photo: Farm broadcasters interview Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter. Left photo: Cindy Zimmerman (Florida Agrinet, Ocala, Fla.), center, poses with USDA R-TV Chief Vic Powell and USDA R-TV Director of Media Liaison Marci Hilt. Right photo: Ed Slusarczyk (Ag Radio Network, Utica, N.Y.) is the center of attention in Vic's office. That's USDA R-TV Deputy Chief Brenda Curtis on the right. (USDA Photo.)

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1721 -- On this segment, Brenda Curtis visits the Orange County Florida Extension Service to learn about their recycling program. Extension Agent Alicia Hamrich talks about the educational program that is the heart of this successful recycling program. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1203 -- Food irradiation is safe; waste into watts; urban 4-H clubs; the shift to unsaturated oils; why file? (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1701 -- USDA News Highlights; haying & grazing restrictions; controlling purple loosestrife; citrus blight; India's tobacco industry. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1322 -- Compound produces leaner pigs; anti-cancer agent; rice resists insects; flavor agent kills aflatoxin; recycling power plant waste. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., June 12, world ag supply & demand; U.S. crop production; Soviet grain situation; Wed., June 13 horticultural exports, world ag production; world oilseed situation; world cotton situation; Mon., June 18, milk production.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE
(Week of May 28, 1990)

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on a new system for surveying cropland with airborne video cameras; DeBoria Janifer looks at new opportunities in aquaculture; Pat O'Leary discovers a cure for "clutter stress."

ACTUALITIES -- Charles Caudill, USDA chief statistician, on the June farm survey; Bob McElroy, USDA economist, on ag income & finance; Larry Van Meir, USDA economist, on feed; Greg Gajewski, USDA economist, on food prices; Ed Allen, USDA economist, on wheat.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on the "father" of USDA's Forest Service, Will Pemble on pest-resistant potatoes.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D
MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFFMIKE

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV's...visit to Minnesota will have the news and farm departments busy, says Roger Strom (WCCO, Minneapolis). Ag and business leaders, the agriculture commissioner and governor's offices have formed a coordinating committee for the Soviet leader's six-hour tour. Following the visit, Roger says, he'll host a program featuring interviews with people who met with the Gorbachevs.

NERVOUS FUTURE...is a description applied to producers in North Dakota, says Mike Hergert (KNOX, Grand Forks). Subsoil in most sections of the state remains dry and timely rains are needed for promising grain and sugar beet crops. But the biggest factor is the outbreak of grasshoppers. Cool temperatures have delayed the hatch. Mike says up to 100 insects are emerging from the 1,700 eggs per square yard, promising infestation and damage of biblical proportions. Spraying operations are being conducted.

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CUTTING HAY...is underway in southwest Missouri in between the series of storms hitting the area, says Mike Wiles (KTTS, Springfield). Fields are not so soggy that producers can't get into them, unlike sections of Arkansas served by Mike's station where flooding has hit hard at agriculture production.

PORK EXPO...coverage at the Iowa state fair grounds was provided by Cindy Cunningham (KICD, Spencer). She produced three reports a day for listeners. Cindy says conditions vary widely in the northwest section of the state. Some grain producers are replanting due to flooding, while the region near South Dakota remains dry. But overall, she says, her area looks good this Spring, with some sections reporting planting operations ahead of schedule.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division